

STANDING TOGETHER

In Memoriam: Paul Baltimore and Ken Taira

Unions lose faculty dedicated to part-timer activism

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It is vital in what has been the long struggle for part-time equity and social justice that we fully acknowledge those activists who up until their passing, gave their all and inspired many. Two such figures are Paul Baltimore and Ken Taira. Both members were recognized at CFT State Council on September 25.

Paul Baltimore, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2279



Paul Baltimore, a part-time faculty member at Folsom Lake College, died on April 8 at age 49. | Photo by Terence Duffy

No less a force and source of inspiration to those who knew him was Paul Baltimore, whose untimely passing at the age of 49 has left the members of the Los Rios College Federation Teachers with a profound sense of loss. Local President Jason Newman said, “Paul Baltimore was a solid organizer and was part of the backbone of all our part-time organizing efforts as Los Rios. His absence is sorely missed and we’re scrambling to find others to assist with our part-timer work.”

Baltimore was campus representative for adjuncts at Folsom Lake College and also a member of local’s Adjunct Caucus. He worked with Los Rios colleague Linda Sneed, also a CFT vice president, to create [The Part-Timer’s Almanac](#), arguably the best such guide of its type, and one that should serve as a model for others to follow. He also served on the CFT [Higher Education Issues Committee](#).

A fierce advocate for part-time faculty, Baltimore was featured in the Sacramento Magazine news story “[Making a Makeshift Living](#).” Here Baltimore spoke of commuting by light rail and bus to teach at multiple campuses in the Sacramento area to make a living, and how he was “hunkered down” as an adjunct instructor. Noting that adjunct teaching was not simply a side gig, but “what people do for a living,” Baltimore spoke to how, beyond the issue of low wages, was the great job insecurity of being an adjunct where “three times a year where you don’t know if you’re going to be able to pay rent.” He called for lawmakers “to be vigilant about the exploitation that this (adjunctification) is creating.”

Baltimore was a beloved teacher known for his enthusiasm and in tributes from his colleagues, called someone who “set the bar on what an awesome teacher really is.” Baltimore was also an artist, novelist, essayist, and cartoonist ... “who had a global perspective that was anchored in a commitment to fairness and justice.” He was further noted for his “rare ability to speak inconvenient truths and tackle issues in truly collaborative ways, without blaming, belittling, or humiliating anyone involved.”

[Baltimore died on April 8.](#)

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Ken Taira, Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, AFT Local 1521